Ideas offered for after-Christmas gifts

By JAMES A. SMITH
Extension Agent

On a recent radio program I made some suggestions about gifts wives might consider for their farmer husbands. Christmas has passed but the suggestions are still valid for birthdays, anniversaries, Valentines Day or whatever. Since these are important tools that need to be used by the top managers, I will list them here.

It may be important to point out that the difference between an average farmer and a top farmer is management. A soil thermometer and a soil tube are just two instruments that need to be in every pick-up truck.

Soil temperature at spring planting is extremely important for soybeans, corn, tobacco, and sorghum.

Soybeans for example need to be planted when the soil temperature is right rather than using suggested dates that are found in production manuals. Soybeans placed in cold soil undergo a shock which we call "cold inhibition". This simply means that if the dry seed absorbs water that is cooler than 58 degrees the seed will either germinate very slowly or not germinate at all. Now, 58 degrees is a laboratory situation. Field temperatures will vary with soil type. Soil temperatures will vary between heavy and light soils and will be lower on poorly drained or soils near wooded areas. For practical purposes the coldest place should be no lower than 60 degrees. Once the soil is warm enough the earlier you can plant the higher the yield.

A good soil thermometer will cost 3 to 5 dollars.

A soil tube makes taking soil samples easier and you'll probably get a better sample. At this time of year broom sedge has no competition and it really stands out. Traveling across the county in recent weeks, I felt that there is an unusual large amount of this weed. It could be telling you that your soil needs lime.

Years ago when lime was $1.50 a ton and cost another buck to get it spread it really didn't make a lot of difference whether a soil test was made. Now with lime costing from 12 to 16 dollars per acre spread; it is important to spend dollars wisely. Use lime but use it only where it will give a response. There are thousands of acres in this county that need to be sampled.

A soil tube will cost 12 to 15 dollars.

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The Holstein Steer sale held in Lynchburg last August averaged $48.46 on 349 head, smallest and lowest sale in the state. There were eight sales that averaged $51.19 on 5661 head.

There will be a Lynchburg Holstein Steer sale in August or early September 1982, so plan to use this as a means of marketing your Holstein steers.

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These three alfalfa varieties will be on the recommended list from 1982:

Apollo - a North American Plant Breeders variety. It was developed primarily for resistance to Phytoohthora root rot and bacterial wilt. It also has fair resistance to anthracnose. It has yielded well and shown good persistence in variety tests in surrounding states and at the Orange Research Station. It would be an excellent choice on fields with less than ideal drainage.

Conestoga - a Hoffman Seeds, Inc. variety. It has excellent resistance to anthracnose and bacterial wilt but very little resistance to Phytophthora root rot. It has performed very well in tests at Orange and Blacksburg, as well as in surrounding states.

Olympic - a North American Plant Breeders variety which replaces Titan on the list. It has excellent anthracnose resistance, good resistance to bacterial wilt, but poor tolerance to Phytophthora root rot. It also has shown excellent yields and persistence.

Gypsy moth threatens

Watch it!

Gypsy moth egg masses have been found on Christmas trees grown in Pennsylvania and New York and now being sold in Fairfax, Williamsburg, Richmond, and the Tidewater area.

Commissioner S. Mason Carbaugh has requested that U. S. Secretary of Agriculture, John R. Block, set up emergency regulations to prevent further introduction of this pest into Virginia. He noted that gypsy moth infested Christmas trees threatened the entire Eastern United States.

Some 50 VDA&CS inspectors from the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services are continuing their surveys of other Christmas tree lots to determine the extent of the egg mass introduction.

Consumers are asked to be on the alert and inspect trees before buying to determine if they are infested. The egg mass is buff or light brown in color from ½" to 1-½" long and ½" to ¾" wide and covered with a fuzzy substance. They can be found attached to the main trunk or the underside of a limb. Each egg mass contains from 500 to 1,000 eggs.

Although the gypsy moth will not harm humans or animals, it poses a threat to Virginia forests. Normally, Christmas trees are not consumed by the caterpillars of the moth, but female moths will lay eggs on most any tree, rocks, or other object nearby.

VDA&CS plant pest personnel note that there is little danger of the eggs hatching this time of year in the house. If the tree is thrown outside of the house following the Christmas season, they could hatch in the spring and start new infestations on nearby host plants.

If you should find an egg mass on your tree, you are urged to take the following steps when you are ready to take the tree down:

(1) Inspect the tree for gypsy moth egg masses

(2) Paint each mass thoroughly with kerosene, rubbing alcohol, cresote, or pruning paint. (Do not apply these liquids inside the house, take the tree outdoors.) Burning, if permitted, also will do the job.

(3) Take the tree to the nearest landfill where it will be buried and eggs destroyed.

(4) Regardless of whether you determine that egg masses are on the tree, be sure the tree is picked up by local authorities in trash pickups (where they will be taken to the landfill), or take it to the landfill yourself.

Commissioner Carbaugh stressed the importance of taking the above precautionary steps so that no new infestations of gypsy moth will be established in Virginia.

Virginia a low-tax state

Is Virginia a high tax state? The answer is no, according to a recent research study by the Virginia Education Association.

The study, "Is Virginia A High Tax State?" shows that Virginia has a relatively low rank among the states in tax revenue at the same time its citizens enjoy a relatively high personal income.

For example, Virginia's state and local tax collections in 1978-79 were $815 per capita, which puts the state at a ranking of 29th in the nation. When those per capita revenues are compared to personal income however, Virginia's rank drops. Virginia's state and local tax collections were less than 9.5 percent of personal income--a ranking of 40th in the nation.

In state tax revenues, as a percentage of personal income, Virginia ranks only 38th in the nation.

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Happy New Year!

SWIFT PROTEN CHUCK ROAST BLADE CUT $1.19 LB.

U.S. NO. 1 ALL PURPOSE POTATOES 10 LB. BAG $1.29

SWISS MISS ICE CREAM ½ GALLON, ALL FLAVORS $1.29

PLUS DEPOSIT MELLO YELLO, MR. PIBB, COKE OR TAB 8 PACK - 16 OZ. BOTS. 99¢

Meat

24 OZ. ROLL, $1.83 GUNNOE'S SAUSAGE $1.29 1 LB. PKG.

LEAN & TENDER BONELESS STEW BEEF $1.99 LB.

SWIFT PROTEN ARM BONE SHOULDER ROAST $1.69 LB.

SWIFT PROTEN IMPERIAL ROAST $1.59 LB.

HYGRADE GRILLMASTER FRANKS 99¢ LB.

SWALTHEY MEAT OR CHICKEN BOLOGNA $1.19 1 LB. PKG.

SAVE ON... OLD CAROLINA BACON 79¢ 12 OZ. PKG.

U.S. PORK FAT BACKS 59¢ LB.

POLISH, MEAT OR BEEF HILLSHIRE FARMS SAUSAGE $1.99 LB.

"NEW YEAR SPECIAL" SMOKED PEPPER COATED HOG JOWLS 79¢ LB.

SKINNED, SLICED, DEVEINED SELECT BEEF LIVER .... LB. 79¢

OLD STYLE COUNTRY CHEESE ..... LB. $2.59

SWIFT PROTEN BONELESS TOP SIRLOIN BUTT WHOLE 9-12 LBS. CUT FREE LB. $1.99

Produce

RED OR GOLDEN DELICIOUS APPLES POUND 39¢

FRESH TURNIP GREENS SAVE! 3 LBS. $1

ALL PURPOSE ONIONS ..... 3 LB. BAG 69¢

LARGE SIZE DOLE PINEAPPLES ..... EACH $1.19

GREEN BELL PEPPERS ..... 4 FOR $1.00

RED RIPE TOMATOES ..... LB. 49¢

Frozen & Dairy

BANQUET FRIED CHICKEN 32 OZ. BOX $2.59

RICHFOOD SLICED AMERICAN CHEESE 12 OZ. PKG. $1.59

RICHFOOD BLACKEYED PEAS 2 10 OZ. PKGS. $1

RICHFOOD QUARTERS MARGARINE ..... LB. 39¢

CHEESE, SAUSAGE, HAM, PEPPERONI FOX PIZZAS ..... 11½ OZ. PKG. 89¢

RICHFOOD ORANGE JUICE 64 OZ. JAR $1.39

Grocery

GOLDEN GRAIN MACARONI & CHEDDAR 3 $1.00 7¼ OZ. BOXES

CONTADINA TOMATO SAUCE 5 $1.00 8 OZ. CANS

LOUIS' BLACKEYED PEAS 2 $1.00 17 OZ. CANS

BUMBLE BEE CHUNK LIGHT TUNA 7½ OZ. CAN 79¢ IN OIL OR WATER

CONTADINA TOMATO PASTE 3 $1.00 6 OZ. CANS

SWIFT VIENNA SAUSAGE 2 $1.00 5 OZ. CANS

SWIFT PREM LUNCH MEAT $1.19 12 OZ. CAN

SWIFT CORNED BEEF HASH 15 OZ. CAN 99¢

RICHFOOD PORK & BEANS 3 $1.00 16 OZ. CANS

RICHFOOD APPLE SAUCE 3 $1.00 16 OZ. CANS

RICHFOOD SALTINE CRACKERS ..... 16 OZ. BOX 59¢

WASHING POWDER RINSO ..... 44 OZ. BOX $1.29

NABISCO (12 VARS.) SNACKS ..... 7-10 OZ. BOXES $1.09

Bakery

PAN ROLLS ..... 9" PAN $1.09

ONION ROLLS ..... 6 FOR 99¢

FRENCH OR ITALIAN BREAD ..... 16 OZ. LOAF 79¢

COBBLESTONE BREAD ..... 16 OZ. LOAF 79¢

BROWN SUGAR PIE ..... 25 OZ. PKG. $2.49

Delicatessen

SPECIAL PARTY TRAYS FOR YOUR NEW YEAR'S PARTY. ANY ITEMS OF YOUR CHOICE AT OUR REG. LOW RETAIL PRICE PLUS $5.00 FOR THE PREPARATION OF PLATTERS.

HOT DOGS W MUSTARD, ONIONS, CHILI, COLE SLAW ..... 4 FOR $1.00

FRESHLY FRIED CHICKEN ..... 8 PIECE BOX $3.99